1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

234 goes to sleep, often saying *Swami* as he lies down for the
512 night.

554 The *tarvali* of the Melgars people is in some ways
778 regarded as superior to the other *tarvali* of the Tartharol.
788 The Melgars *tarvalikartmokh* may not go to the *tarvali* of another Tarthar clan, though the *tarvalikartmokh* of another clan may go to a Melgars *tarvali*. This was said to be due to the higher degree of sanctity of the Melgars dairy and office, but there do not appear to be any differences of ritual corresponding to this different degree of sanctity.

THE KUDRPALI

234 The special feature of the *kudrpali* is that it contains one
778 or more of the bells called *mani*. This involves several
788 additions to the ceremonial of the dairy, and these are accompanied by more stringent rules of conduct for the dairyman.

234 Whenever engaged in his work, the *kudrpalikartmokh* must be
292 naked except for the *kuvn*. In the cold Nilgiri mornings it must
461 often be a very unpleasant task to have to milk the buffaloes
463 with no covering, and I was told that at some places, and especially at Nòdrs, the people gave up the maintenance of a *kudrpali* on account of the difficulty experienced in obtaining men to undertake the office of dairyman.

234 When the *kudrpalikartmokh* is taking his meals, he must
264 hold his food in his hands till he has finished. He is not
778 allowed to put it down on the ground, as may be done by
788 the dairyman of the *tarvali*.

Soon after beginning to churn, the *kudrpalikartmokh* takes up some of the broken-up curd (*adrpars*) and puts it on the bell (*mani*) three times, saying "*Oh*" each time, and milk from the vessel first brought into the dairy is also put on the bell in the same manner.

234 At the *kudrpali* of Kars, the dairyman puts the curd and
778 milk on a board called *pato*. The bells of this dairy have
788 been lost, and the dairyman puts the milk on the board on which the bells used to hang. The process of putting milk on the bells is properly called *terzantirikiti*, but the Todas

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must also be celibate while at the dairy. The *pohkartpol* must take his food sitting on the outer wall which surrounds the dairy. He must not put his hand to his mouth, but must throw his food in; nor must he put the leaf used as a cup to his lips, but must pour into his mouth from above.

Several of these rules and restrictions are even more severe than those for the *palol*, to be considered in the next chapter. The reason given for the strictness of ritual is that the god Kwoto or Meilitars "had done so many wonderful things on that side" (see Chapter IX).

One feature peculiar to the Kanòdrs dairy is that milk receives the special name *pərsin*. This is the name of the churning-vessel of the *ti*, but is not used for milk in any other dairy. Otherwise the names used at Kanòdrs are the same as at other village dairies.

The Teivali Dairy

Among the Teivaliol, the various grades of dairy and dairymen so far considered have no existence. Many Teivali villages have two dairies, but each is served by a *palikartmokh* of the same rank.

The general procedure of the Teivali dairy does not appear to differ in any very marked respect from that of the Tarthar *tarvali*. The most marked difference which I could discover is in the clothing of the dairyman. When engaged in the dairy operations, the Teivali *palikartmokh* wears, at any rate in some cases, the *tuni*, or garment of dark grey cloth of the same kind as that worn by the *wursol*.

The sacred buffaloes of the Teivaliol are known as *pasthir*, and there are no differences corresponding to the different grades of the Tartharol. Similarly with one exception, the Teivali *pasthir* of each clan have no special names like the *martir*, *naskperthir*, &c., of the Tartharol. The exception is that the buffaloes of the Piedr clan are called *kudəipir* or *kudipir*, apparently the same name as that of the *kurzulir* of Pan.

The village of Kiudr, belonging to the Kuudrol, possesses a dairy of special sanctity (see Fig. 31). It is served by a

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

FOOD

262 The chief foods are milk, buttermilk, ghi, grain, rice, and
272 sugar. The chief drink is buttermilk, and milk is used chiefly when boiled with rice or grain.

252 In clarifying their butter the Todas add some grain or rice,
262 and this forms a sediment on the bottom of the cooking vessel which is called *al*, which is the chief food of the dairymen, and it is probably also used largely as a food in ordinary life.

262 A list of various herbs, fruits, &c., eaten by the Todas is
437 given by Mr. Thurston.[1] There is very little doubt that at one time these were used much more largely than at present, when the grain provided by the Badagas is supplemented by rice and grain bought in the bazaar. The Todas have a tradition of a time when they lived chiefly on roots, herbs, fruits and honey, and the importance of honey comes out in several of their legends.

252 A much prized substance called *patcherski* is made from
262 *samai* grain (*Panicum miliare*), which is roasted and pounded so as to get rid of the husk. It is used in the preparation of a food which is eaten on all the chief ceremonial occasions. When they prepare it the Todas say "*ashkkartpimi*," and this verbal form is used as the name of the food. In making *ashkkartpimi*, *patcherski* is put into a basket (*tòdri*) which has been carefully cleansed by rubbing it all over with dried buffalo-dung. Buttermilk and jaggery are added and the whole mixed together and rolled into balls, each about as large as a cricket ball. When eating, a hole is made in the ball into which ghi and butter, sometimes honey,
261 are poured, and then the hole is covered with rice.[2] A man will usually eat two of these balls at a feast, but a greedy man may manage three or four.

264 The Todas do not like others to see them eating, and if
754 this happens, the same consequences may ensue as are produced by the evil eye.

[1] *Bulletin*, vol. iv., p. 16.

[2] *Ashk* is one of the Toda words for rice, and the name of the food is therefore derived from this substance.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

produced by the evil eye. Their natural politeness also makes the Todas uncomfortable when they see others eating, and in the early part of my visit I sometimes dispersed a group surrounding me by taking sandwiches out of my pocket and beginning to eat.

I did not ascertain definitely who cooks among the Todas. I had some reason to suppose that all the cooking is done by the men and that the women have nothing to do with this part of domestic economy, but I am not clear about this. It is possible that it is only food containing milk which must be cooked by the men.

The Todas are an example of a people who have no native intoxicant, but they have now taken to alcoholic drinks, though I do not believe that they indulge in these habitually. The only occasions on which I saw Todas under the influence of alcohol were when they were returning from the bazaar on market days. I was only once asked by a Toda for alcohol and then by a woman. Tobacco is now largely used and opium is certainly also used, though I do not believe that it is taken in excess. It may be employed, however, as a means of committing suicide.

Fire-making

We have already seen that the fire used for several sacred purposes must be made by friction with the fire-sticks. The method employed is a variety of the drill method shown in Figs. 65 and 37. In the former the *wursol* of Taradr is making fire in order to enable me to procure a photograph; the latter is the result of a snapshot taken when the fire was being produced during a ceremony. In the horizontal stick, which is held firmly by the foot, a hole is made for the insertion of the vertical stick, and in this a little charcoal is placed. A small groove is cut on one side to assist the falling of the spark on the tinder beneath. The vertical stick is inserted into the hole and twirled between the two hands. In the only case in which I saw fire produced by friction in a ceremony (Fig. 37), the continued efforts of the two old men were unavailing, and a third younger man was called upon,

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAP. VIII.

The Todas state it, as a matter of tradition amongst them, that the time was when they subsisted largely upon roots. They are even now partial, amongst others, to that which is known in India by the name of Salup Misri—orchis mascula—a terrestrial orchid which grows in great abundance on these hills. The woods also abound in edible varieties of wild-fruit—pôm—and herbs of sorts.

Intoxicating liquor or drug had never been utilised by these people prior to the arrival of the English. And tobacco is still a luxury.

Infants are nursed by their mothers, as a matter of general habit, for about three years: and it is not uncommon, for them to be still suckling when in the sixth year. Boiled millet or rice warmed in milk is a common article of diet for young children.

As a general rule, food is either eaten uncooked or boiled: but is sometimes baked or parched.

The Todas have no 'caste' prejudices; those Âryan fears of contamination which haunt the population of the plains, requiring that persons not of the precise same grade of life or family, should cook and eat apart: and which place obstacles to the intermarriage of those of different castes, as insuperable as if they were of foreign religions or nationalities.

Their two meals—which the women almost invariably cook—are eaten between the hours of 9 and 10 in the morning, and of 7 and 8 in the evening, in their little houses, but never in the dairy.

Men and women do not eat together at home, but the adult males of the family dine first, then the females. This as a matter of etiquette; which is not however so stringent as to preclude the women from eating before the men if there should be just occasion for them to do so. Children of both sexes have their meals either with the men or with the women. When one comes to consider the smallness of their houses and the primitive nature of their practices, one cannot

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

but see that both convenience and good habits have been consulted in following these rules. CHAP. VIII.

Before eating, each member of the family takes a little of the food in his fingers, and raising it to the forehead says Swâmi! Swâmi![7] then places it on the ground as a present to bhumi tai[8] or mother earth. After meals these offerings are swept out of doors.

Before the Englishman came to the Nilagiris, and colonised the Todas' land, the country was full of game; hares, pea-fowl, partridge, jungle fowl, and numerous small birds, filled the secluded woods: deer of sorts, bison, and jungle-sheep roamed their open pastures: the tiger and leopard were common: and packs of the wild dog—chen nai[9]—running mute, hunted the largest deer with the unerring certainty of fate. The Toda buffalos, half-wild, had learnt to defend themselves and their young by tactics, the offspring of their bravery and skill; forming a rough triangular phalanx, with the courageous and strong bulls at apex and flanks, and the females and young in the hollow of the base, they would face the common enemy, and charging him in a body, gore and trample him under foot. The Todas, confident in the prowess of these animals, leave them to be herded by mere striplings armed with light wands; knowing that the amimals, and the children under their protection, would be perfectly safe.

Yet in the face of these attractions of sport: in the presence of considerable danger: and with the example of the brute creation before them, they have not adopted a weapon, even one so simple as a spear. They neither make nets, nor do they construct traps or pitfalls. They do not employ any of

[7] Swâmi = *lord*.

[8] Bhumi tai = *earth mother*. It appears likely that both the words and the practice have been copied from the Badagas.

[9] Chen = *red*, nai = *dog*. May not the French *chien* be derived from chen = *the red (one)*?

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

Long looked for dinner appears to be ready; for the heated woman now emerges into the open air, and the men and boys enter the hut, leaving the females to prolong the talk. When each member of the community has in turn, eaten, and the offerings to bhumi tai have been swept out of doors, the whole family in the village join grouped about in primitive dinginess, and quiet unconspicuous attitude; some under the veranda eaves, others on the tûar, or under its quiet shelter: and there rehearse the day's events. The naked pâlkarpâl also, having completed his separate cooking, squats apart upon the wall, whence he can hear the news and add his distant note to the conversation.

And thus the shades of evening close in upon them. The air grows chill, and the careful mother of the smallest, rises to take the infant she has kept under her dress, into the well baked house. She stops a moment: looks round to the sky where the Blushing moon, ascending vertically through the trees in hot pursuit of the now vanished sun, illumines her womanly face. 'Swâmi, Swâmi!' she mutters, with hands to forehead, supporting the while, her young one in the bend of her arm, 'Mokh ultama, ellam ultama:' and stoops in at the little doorway. Two or three sleepy-headed children soon stagger in after her. Note the pretty daughter in her teens, plump and white teethed, with hair tightly curled, and eyes that brilliantly catch the sparkle of the moon. She has been taught to say her prayers: but unmarried and without a care, the sense of responsibility is not strong upon her; she has no child to shiver for. She gives a rather hurried salute, bringing her head down to her hands, rather than take the young arms out of their envelope in the chill: a quick 'Êyan, appa!' and in she ducks, shutting the door after her. A prolonged rustle may be heard as the brood settle themselves in the dark, to rest on the warm hearth; with a mantle on the floor and another covering all their nakedness. The healthy baby, with eyes wide open, trying in vain to penetrate the gloom, disturbs the mother on the raised bed, who is now

602 ing the hair or in bathing. The latter is so extended that one may not even be present while the other is bathing, though the preparing and bringing of bath-water is allowed and is as a matter of course done for a father by [264] his daughter. Another curious taboo may be placed here, though it is limited in its operation in such a way that its allocation is somewhat doubtful. The water with which a man washes his right hand after eating (it should be remembered that in India the food is handled with the right hand only) must not be thrown away by his female poɭjoıɭ or ŭɯdmortkvæıdvoj who is older than himself. His mother may do so and normally does until he marries, when his wife normally performs the office. His daughter or daughter-in-law may also dispose of the water. There is also a prohibition against breaking wind in the presence of a ŭɯdmortkvæıdvoj or poɭjoıɭ of the opposite sex.

602 533 Men and women seldom sing together, though it sometimes happens, and more especially in the case of husband and wife. But ŭɯdmortkvæıdvoj and poɭjoıɭ of opposite sex are forbidden not only to sing together but even to sing at the same time in one another's hearing. If a man is singing out of sight but within hearing of a woman of these categories and she wishes to burst into song, she will first ask who is singing and then regulate her actions accordingly; so also if a man hears a woman singing. One can only suppose that if they sang at the same time, they would be considered to be acting as if they were marriageable.

521 602 196 192 References to all subjects, whether regarded by our communities as decent or indecent, are very freely made in Toda conversations, as I have had occasion to observe when getting information from parties in which both men and women were present. Very frank speech is usual with women as well as men. But between poɭjoıɭ or ŭɯdmortkvæıdvoj of opposite sex, or even when one of these is present in the company but not actually addressed, this freedom is taboo. Reference, whether direct or by circumlocution, is forbidden to sexual intercourse, menstruation, the private parts, including by extension the nipple, the navel, the armpit, and pubic hair, to [333] the secreta, or breaking wind. Biting the skin of the neck while making love seems to be common, and the red mark which lasts for some time is [522] a subject for the jest: "You have been bitten by a tiger." Use of the compound verb stems which denote the act of biting in this way (mɯrɣŭart–, "neck-cut," and kŭartɣŭɯrt–, "cutting-give") or any indirect reference or jesting is forbidden between people between whom the taboos operate. So also is the use of the word kŭɯɪdjvöɪn, "fowl-lice," which also denotes the insects found in the pubic hair or the hair of the armpits; reference to these insects is also forbidden. Other words are forbidden in specific senses.

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melgarsh Village]

the time of their wedding. In the unusual case of a man having no brothers and no nephews to whom the buffaloes devolve after his death, the herd will go to the *poim*.

I had put up a tent in this immediate vicinity of the Melgarsh *mad*, and was thus able, by staying in it up the twenty-four hours on certain occasions, to follow the everyday life of the family.

The habitual routine was really quite simple. The various members of Melgarsh would sleep in their respective houses as described above, and rise very early with the sun, which in southern India is already up at 4.30 a.m. Pads and Silidz would say their morning prayers (as all Todas do, see Rivers, *The Todas*, p. 31), attend to the calls of nature in the bushes close by, and then prepare the morning food. There was very little washing, the clothes which were taken off at night (underclothes are worn then) being put on again. While Silidz was doing the cooking, Pads would go out and lend a hand with the buffaloes, which were taken out of the pen at this early hour and allowed to graze on the ground in front of the house. He was assisted in this by Munbokwutn, Pershrörsh, Narjilkh, Singarsh and sometimes Singud and Kuddhue. The latter, usually *tarvalikartmokh*, would then milk the buffaloes at 8 a.m. before they left with the boys, Munbokwutn and Singarsh, for higher grazing grounds, after the morning meal. Narjilkh would have let the calves out earlier and would have helped to retain them at Melgarsh away from their mothers. The gardeners (Pads, Mutnarsh, Pilkhlivowutn and Pufvkiaroz) once the meal was over would put on some dreadful rags, which were considered by them to be European clothes, and go off to their work in the Botanical Gardens. The women would stay at home and tidy up the houses, sweep them out, wash themselves (especially the younger ones), pound rice in the *kudi*, and cook the evening meal.

The meals are selected from the following foods: milk, buttermilk, butter, *ghee* (clarified *butter*), millet (an Indian cereal), rice, wheat flour in the form of unleavened bread or *gur*, (unrefined cane sugar), coffee, tea, chillis, bamboo shoots, fruits from the woods and honey. No meat is eaten, as Todas, like other Indians, are vegetarians. I obtained this list from Mutnarsh, and as he was very keen to give me all the information that he could, he even asked me, through the interpreter, if I wanted to see how he ate. He was willing, he said, to eat in front of me, then and there. I had some difficulty in dissuading him, and only succeeded by accepting to have rice with him another day, which I did. In caste-ridden India, this was rather exceptional, and I was glad to join

13; Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melqarsh Village]

264 123 Mutnarsh and his family in an excellent bowl of rice which had been prepared specially for me. We all ate with our fingers, with the right hand, as is the Indian custom.

512 In the afternoon, the gardeners would return from their work before 5 o'clock, while the women would sit about sewing and embroidering *putkulis*. The children would play, and those men who stayed behind, like Motsod for instance, would either sleep or receive visitors from other *munds*. After 5 p.m. the buffaloes were brought back; they would [234] be milked again by the *tarvalikartmokh* and then put away in the pen, while Narjilkh would see to it that the calves were in for the night. Kuddhue would churn the milk in the dairy-temple, and the buttermilk and the butter would be brought out by his attendants to be handed over to the women at the precise spot (marked with an upright stone) beyond [264] which they are not allowed. The evening meal would be eaten and everybody would go to bed early, practically immediately after sunset (7 p.m.).

[123] When I worked only half a day with these people, I would usually stay with them from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. talking and watching what was going on. This seemed to be the best time in which to get information from the Todas.

3. THE POLYANDROUS UNIT

844 845 Approximately two weeks after I had arrived in the Nilgiris, on the 18th May, 1949, Erzigwuf gave birth to twins for the second time. It was about 8 p.m. when she felt unmistakable pains. She immediately got on to the *kitten* of the room she lived in and assuming a kneeling position, [606] called for Silidz, her mother-in-law, who came at once to assist her. A first child, a boy, was born without difficulty, and, the pains continuing, half an hour later a little girl also made her appearance, who was taken out, like the first baby, from behind by Silidz. The latter cut the cords with a pair of scissors, tied the remaining stumps tightly with hair and [278] smeared the wounds with an astringent root from the marshes which the Todas call *poli*; she next went away from the *arsh* and buried the cords and the afterbirth in a hole which she made in the ground. The newborn babies were washed in hot water and with soap (bought in the bazaar), and laid to rest with their mother, who had by now moved back to the *ertilkh* where she was resting on her back. She did not start to 853 feed them before the next day.

845 When I saw her then, in the evening, she was sitting on the *kitten*, naked to the waist, suckling one of the babies from her left breast. She